



The Influence of National Affiliation in Multinational Endeavours: Case Study

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Theory
Previous Findings
Hypotheses
Object of Study
Method
Findings
Implications

Theory

Socialisation (Long & Hadden, 1985, Harstein 2009)

Group identification – people behave as they do because “it’s the right thing to do”

Principal-Agency (Arrow 1971, Wilson, 1968, Eisenhart 1989, Checkel, 2001)

Incentives and control – behaviour is a rational strategy, not based on personal preferences

Social Exchange (Homans 1958; Thibault & Kelley 1959, Bottom et al, 2006)

Affection and goodwill, friendship and trust - unconditioned payment results in a felt obligation to repay

Previous Findings

Drnevich, Ramanumiam, Mehta & Chaturvedi (2005): Organisational affiliation drives JOC-members early on, but over time this is replaced by situational needs as drivers

Beyers & Trondal (2004), Thompson (2008), and Hartstein (2009): Strong national identification in military coalitions and EU political contexts persists over time – permanent affiliational ties prevail

Hypotheses

1. Over time, staff members are socialised into a multinational staff identity, which shifts their perspectives from national towards supranational
2. Staff member's consideration of national interests correlates with their nation's relative investment in the mission

EUFOR Tchad/RCA

Operational Head Quarters (OHQ)

Activated from Nov 2007 till May 2009



Strategic multinational military staff

Reporting to EU Military Staff (EUMS)

130 staff members from 25 European nations

510 individuals passing through in 18 months

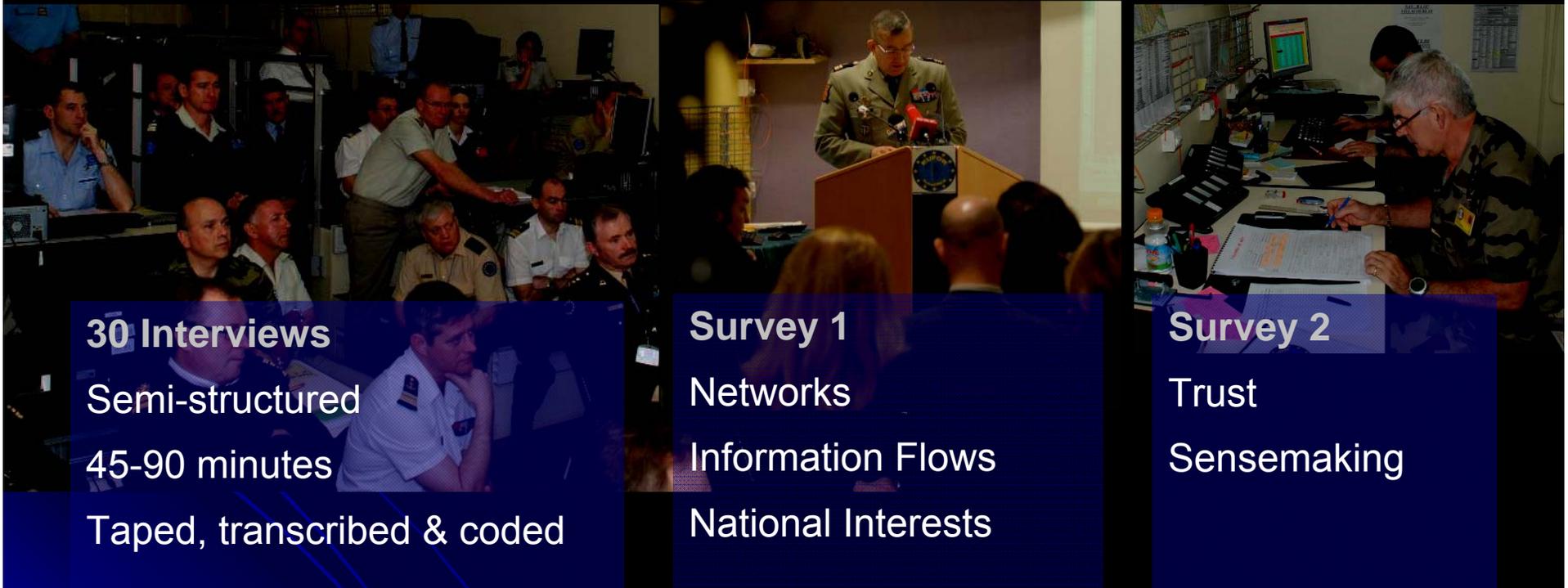
Field contributions mirrored in staff representation

Working language English, but only 13% English native speakers

The Study

Focus: Sources of friction in staff member interaction – trust, legitimacy and affiliation

Method: Participating observation: explorative→descriptive, qualitative→quantitative



30 Interviews
Semi-structured
45-90 minutes
Taped, transcribed & coded

Survey 1
Networks
Information Flows
National Interests

Survey 2
Trust
Sensemaking



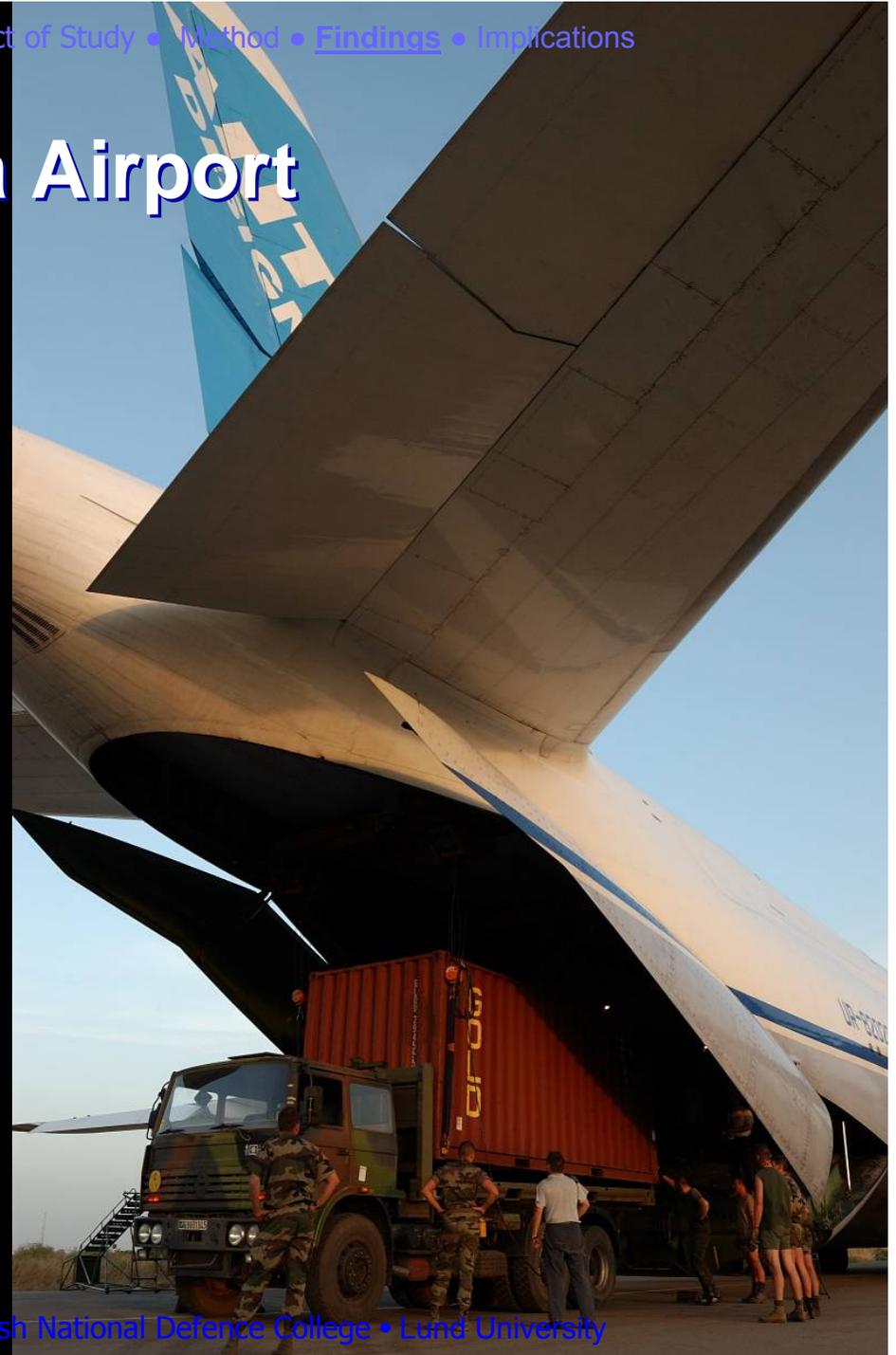
Taxes on N'Djamena Airport

EUFOR-only flights
exempted from taxes

Tchad claims mixed
cargo for certain
nation's flights

National in key
position - no EUFOR-
internal action

Result - substantial
extra costs for all



Interviews



Staff member's associated frictions in work with other's...

Nationality 28 (93%)

- interests
- agendas
- culture
- language

Experience 6 (20%)

- training
- previous missions

Rank 4 (13%)

Time in staff 2 (7%)



Interviews

Staff members from leading nations on national considerations:

"If there is a (national) that has been there from the beginning I would go to him then, to have... the, let's say the (national) point of view or maybe some clarification on what was the process and... yes, I am a multinational but I am also a (national), in the staff."

(LtCol, Januari 2008)

"There has been times when I've been asked or told, (name) put on your (national) hat and tell me this or do this"

(NCO, Januari 2009)

Interviews

Staff members from non-leading nations on national considerations:

"I defer my personal feelings to somebody and what he is doing, because I am aware that some people are under pressure of national commander or, what they think they should do"

(Col, Januari 2008)

"You are paid for from by through national chain you of course have to be receptive and support your own, eh, national agenda. If you don't you're going to have issues along the way"

(LtCol, December 2008)

"...they try to support the best interest of their countries, so it is not coming from organized control from a specific agency; it is coming from inside every personality."

(Col, Mars 2009)

Interviews

Framing of national interests – shift over time:

“double decision making processes”

“unproblematic”

“concealed motives”

“understandable”

“hidden agendas”

“comparable to other missions”

“conflict”

“aligned with mission’s common interest”

in 2008

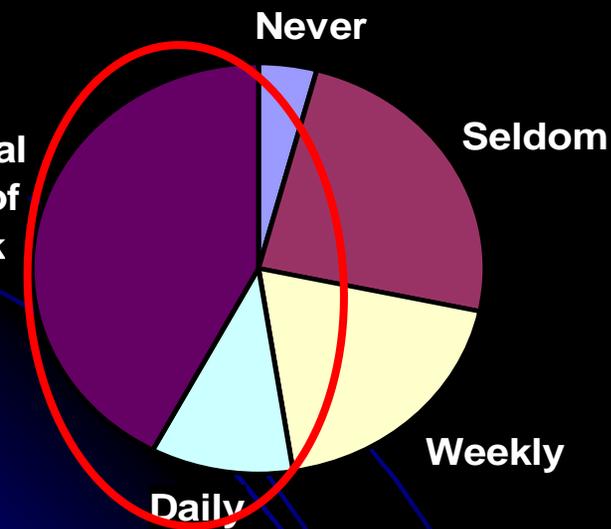
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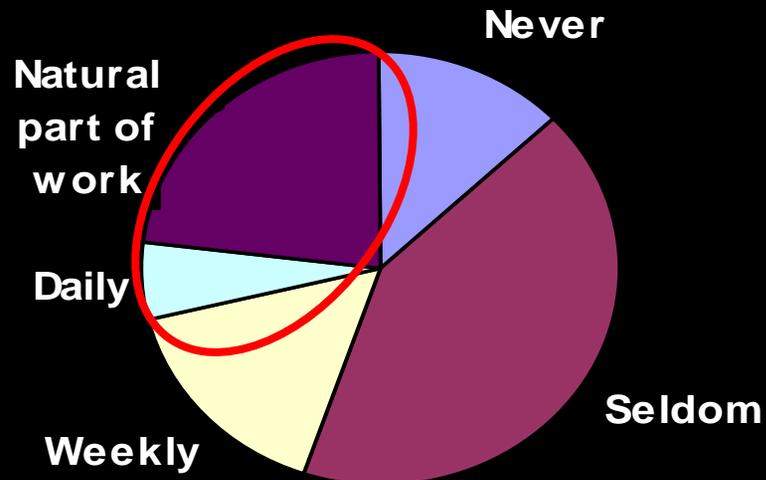
Survey 1 - Staff National Interests

Q: How often do you think about the interests of your nation in your daily work?

Leading Nation Staff Members

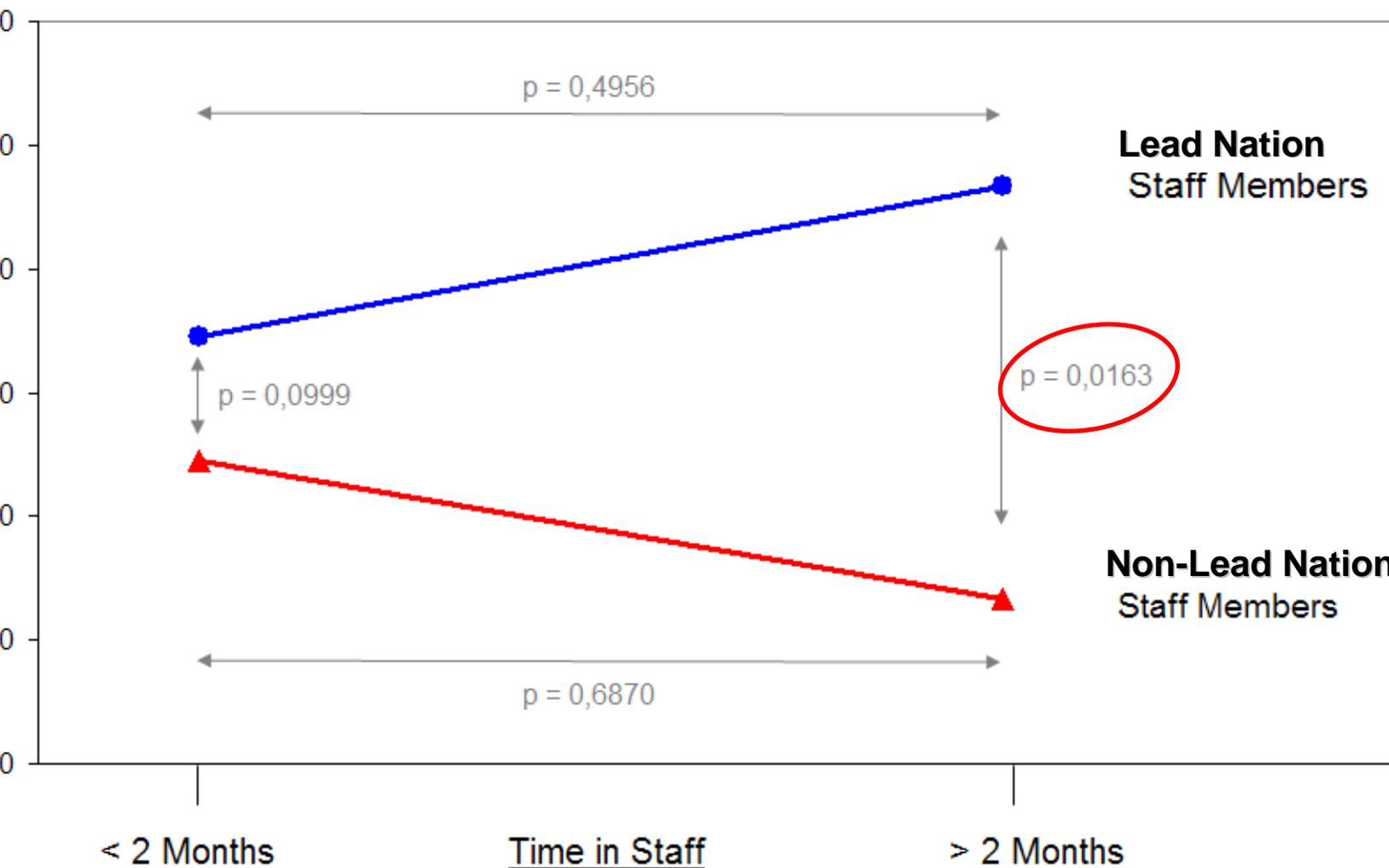


Non-Leading Nation Staff Members



Consideration of national interests daily or more: Development over time

(Statistical significance: Fisher's Exact Test, at $\alpha=0,05$)





my trust

it



"In general, most people can be trusted"



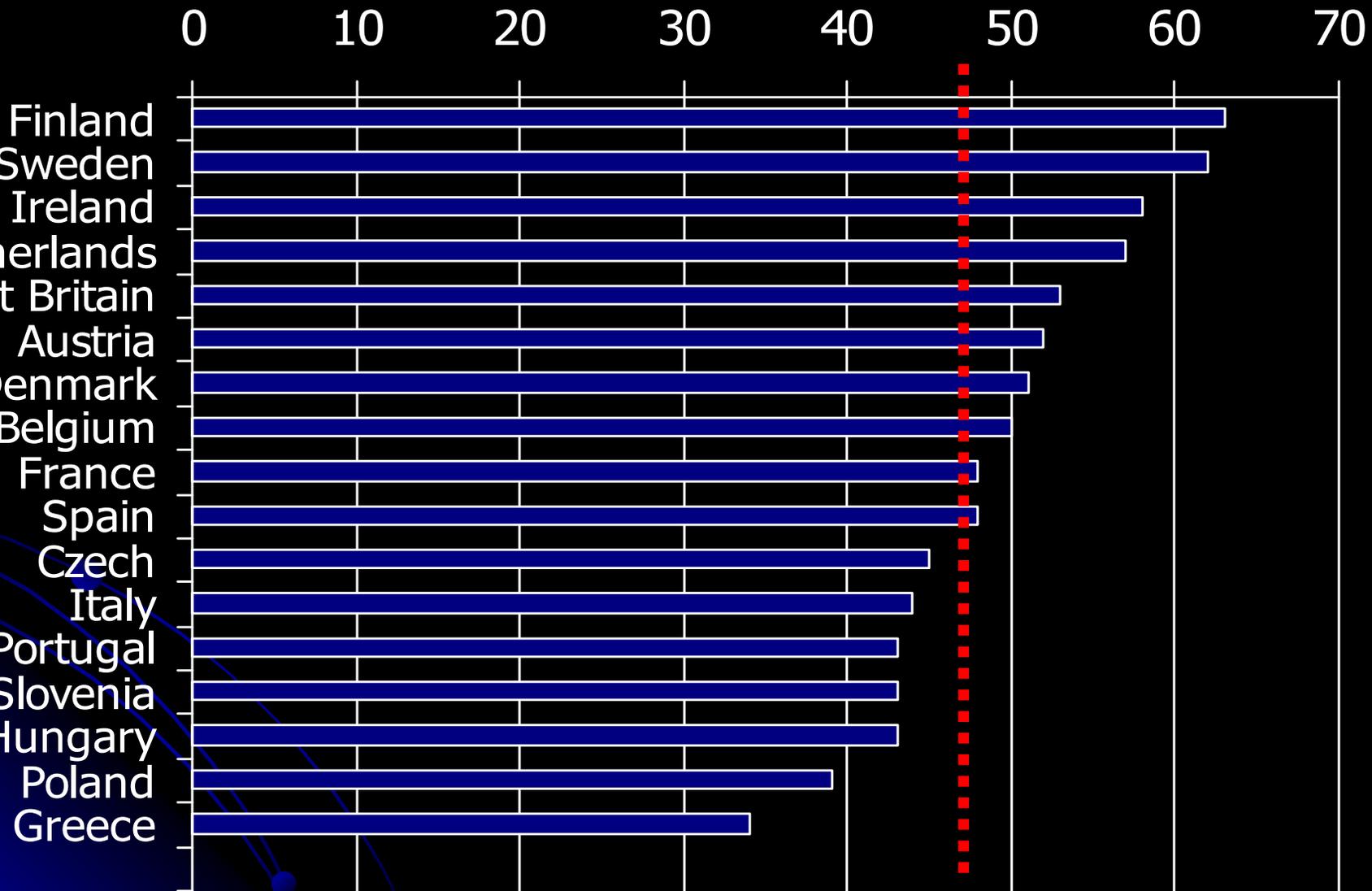
I disagree
completely

I agree
completely

European Social Survey 2002, in Adam (2006)

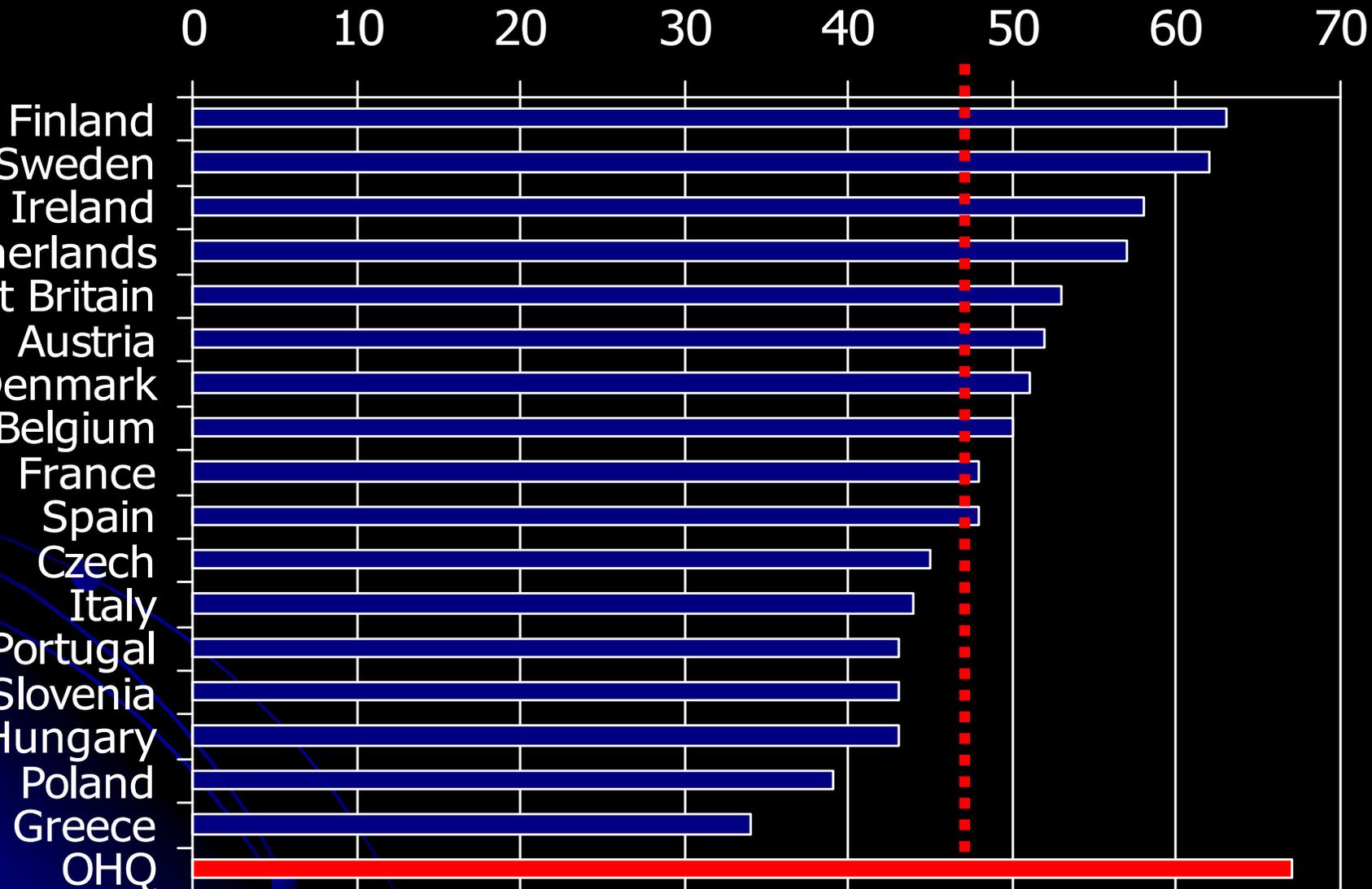
Theory • Previous Findings • Hypotheses • Object of Study • Method • Findings • Implications

“In general, most people can be trusted” (11 degree weighted scale)



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“In general, most people can be trusted” (11 degree weighted scale)



Hypotheses

Over time, staff members are socialised into a multinational staff identity, which shifts their perspectives from national towards supranational

Not supported – national perspectives persist.
However, becomes less problematic over time

Staff member's consideration of national interests correlates with their nation's relative investment in the mission

Supported – lead nationals more biased than other nationals. "Longtermers" more biased than newcomers

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Multiple national reminders

Uniforms

Charts

Meeting room layouts

Briefings

National social events

National Senior Officers

Home office reporting

Why different from field results?

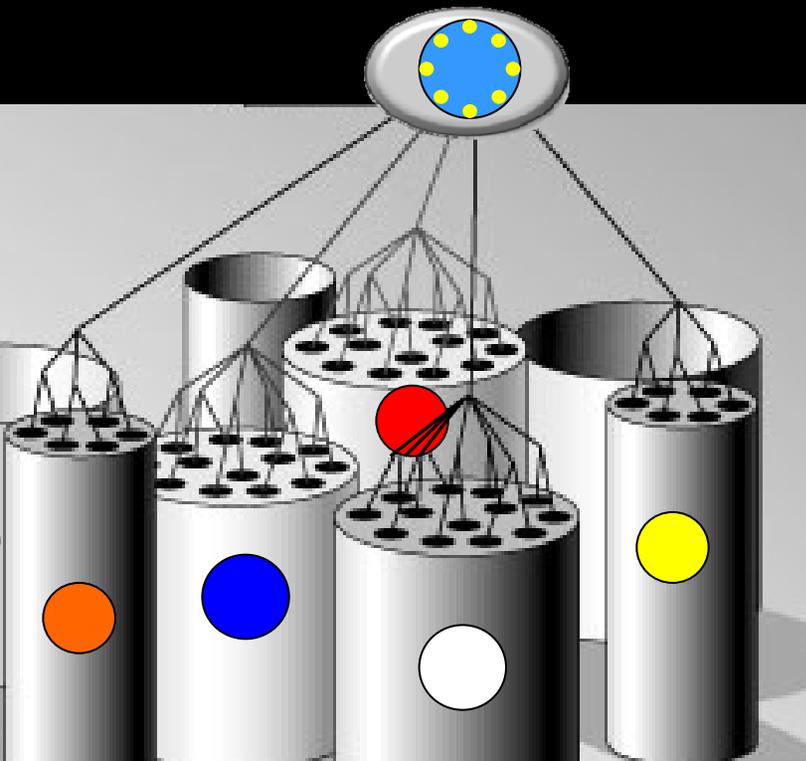
"If you are in the field and there is a common dependence, and there is a certain threat to the existence, pressure, ... there is a cohesion which is created. There is a unification of purpose and that everybody seems to be looking towards that common goal...

...That is very, very different to the response you may get at a political or strategic headquarters where people are very distant, far removed from the actual theatre itself and therefore their motives can be very, very different and consequently their actions and reactions and interaction can differ quite significantly. "

(Colonel, Lead Nation, Jan 2008)

Effects of affiliation bias

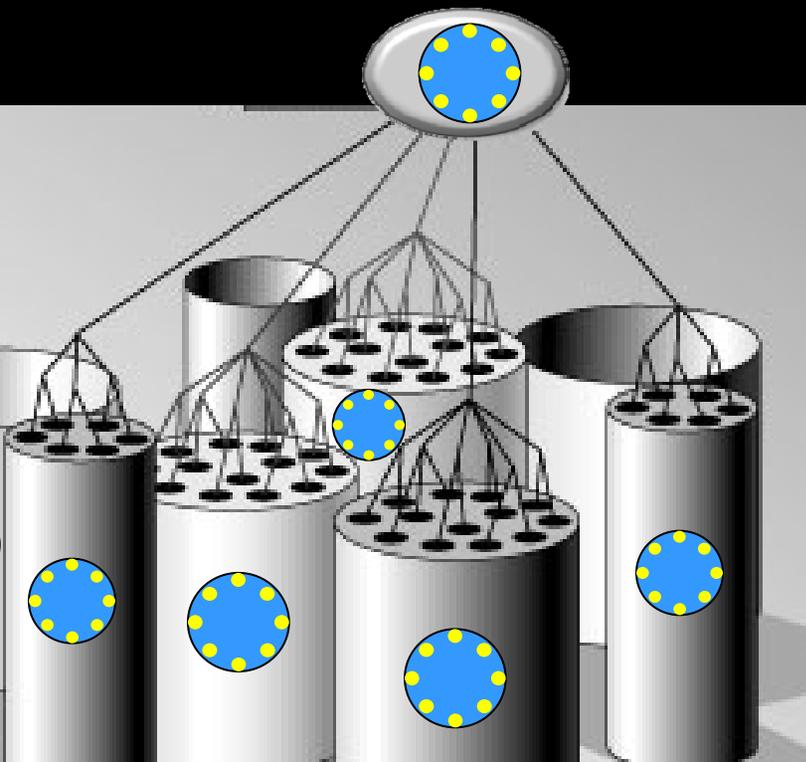
Internal: possible effects ranging from frustration to slower decision making, and sub-optimal decisions



External: signal effects of lack of cohesion and unity of effort – may affect partner support and adversary compliance

Future Research

1. Replicate affiliation bias in controlled settings
2. Investigate influence of drivers – value bases (culture) vs. dependencies (career, payment and reporting)



3. Develop and test model for minimizing affiliation effects
4. Investigate to what degree affiliation bias is detrimental to staff effectiveness

Questions?

"...the human interaction and human relationship of the Headquarters itself, and social interaction, is exactly what I expected in a multinational organisation.

All the good parts in there, all the bad parts in there. And I think if we come back in twenty years and do something, it will look the same again.

Because one of the things that I have found, people do not change that much."

(Colonel, leading nation, April 08)